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Utilization of gill rakers of lesser devil ray *Mobula diabolus* - a new fish by product

The skin of the rays *Dasyatis uarnak* and *D. jenkinsii* are used as an excellent source of leather. It is expensive due to its high durability. In addition to the skin of the rays, the gill rakers of the lesser devil ray *Mobula diabolus* is exported in recent years. Hitherto discarded, gill rakers of rays have now gained importance. Following demand, the lesser devil ray *M. diabolus* (family: Mobulidae) has

formed a new fishery for mechanized gillnets along the Chennai coast since 2005. Lesser devil rays are auctioned in the sea shore for Rs. 5 to 8 per kg. The merchants buy these rays, cut them and remove the head portions. The remaining body portions are cut into small strips and salted with ice. After removing the gill rakers without any damage, the head portions are thrown into the sea. The gill

rakers are washed in fresh water and dried in the sun. After drying, the gill rakers are sold to the traders at Chennai for Rs. 500/- per

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